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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/21/2019
TAGS: PREL PGOV SN
SUBJECT: BURMA DEMARCHE: SINGAPORE PREFERS PRIVATE
ENGAGEMENT, PLEASED WITH U.S. POLICY

REF: SECSTATE 108210

Classified By: EP Counselor Joel Ehrendreich for Reasons 1.4 (b + d).

¶1. (C) Political Chief delivered reftel dermarche to Southeast Asia Deputy Director Raymond Chow October 21, urging Singapore to reinforce to the Burmese leadership at the upcoming ASEAN Summit that a window of opportunity exists for the GOB to improve its international standing by initiating a credible dialogue with the regime political opponents.

¶2. (C) Singapore is pleased with the new U.S. policy towards Burma and believes engagement is an effective tool for eventually persuading the GOB to initiate reforms, Chow said. Chow reiterated Singapore's view that the GOB will likely only initiate reforms incrementally.

¶3. (C) Chow said Singapore considers Burma to "be a brother," and the GOS would likely continue its policy of private engagement with the GOB, to enlighten the Junta on the West's perceptions of Burma and emphasize the limited time-frame that this window of opportunity will exist. Chow noted that the Singapore delegation to the ASEAN Summit had departed Singapore for Hua Hin today, but said he would ensure that the U.S. message would be passed on to Singapore's ASEAN delegation.

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